

APPROVED
PAGE 2

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Casey ignored Iran skeptics, aide says

Washington

The late CIA director, William Casey, sidestepped subordinates who questioned the Reagan administration's secret weapons sales to Iran, according to testimony released yesterday.

Clair George, the agency's deputy director for operations, said Mr. Casey overruled his strong objections to individuals involved in the arms deals, including retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Richard Secord, who arranged logistics for arms shipments, and an Iranian middleman Mr. George called "a bum."

George's closed-door testimony Aug. 5 and 6 before the congressional Iran-contra committees was released yesterday, though some sensitive portions were blacked out.

The CIA official said he went directly to Casey with his objections after learning that Iranian Manucher Ghorbanifar was the only intermediary for dealings with Iran.

Mr. Casey resigned as CIA director in February after being hospitalized seven weeks earlier. He died in May.

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